DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 162 196 CG 012 942

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TITLE The Role of Art and Science in the Training of Non-Professional Counselors.
PUB DATE 7 Apr 78
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Suicidology (11th, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 6-9, 1978); Best Copy Available

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Patterns; *Counselor Training; *Helping Relationship; *Mental Health Programs; *Nonprofessional Personnel; State of the Art Reviews; *Volunteer Training

ABSTRACT

The training program is one of the most important and least standardized programatic units. It is important to keep in mind that various volunteers cannot be mass produced into professional social workers, psychologists or counselors by six-, eight- or 10-week courses. It is essential that the trainer integrate the key concepts presented and discussed because the trainees must learn first that counseling is not wholly an art or a science, but that it is a sequence of events--a process. Secondly, helpers must learn that helping is a process by which forces in the client are released enabling them to deal more effectively with their lives. This process is scientific because human behavior has predictable patterns, and artistic because it uses intuition in selection of techniques to fit client needs. At the same time agencies must consider the role of art and science in the process of helping in order to define the desired programatic level of services. (Author/EN)

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THE ROLE OF ART AND SCIENCE IN THE TRAINING OF NON-PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

One of the most important and least standardized programatic units from one suicide prevention/crisis intervention center to another is the training program. At a time when the "How to do it Yourself" bookshelf promises instant expertise on life through burial, it is important to keep reminding ourselves that housespouses, teachers and truck drivers can not be mass-produced into social workers, psychologists or other professional helpers by 6, 8, or 10 week courses. The reason for this lies in the art and science of the process of helping. All helping is either professional or non-professional and the difference is determined by the helper's degree of awareness of the nature and dynamics involved in helping. Sufficient knowledge of the nature of the sequence of events or process of helping can be mastered, however, to the extent necessary for competent performance by non-professional helpers when training and supervision are provided. Suicide prevention/crisis intervention centers have been in the forefront of the movement to utilize volunteer resources in professional settings by raising the awareness of non-professional persons through the provision of training in some of the basic art and science elements of the process of helping. Still, non-professional counselors appear to hear far too little about art and science in the nature of help.

Neandertal Man hunted in organized groups over 50,000 years ago, (Holmes)[1] and the sight of a companion cornered by the prey may have marked the beginning of the concept of providing assistance and helping in a crisis. To some professional helpers, it seems that the artistic versus scientific nature of that help has been debated ever since. To the non-professional or volunteer counselor, however, this debate remains generally unknown or seemingly unimportant - an intellectual and rhetorical exercise. Few non-professionals have adequate opportunity to

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explore and resolve this issue for themselves. This lack of opportunity is an educational deficiency for the debate is too important to be treated so casually.

Believing that helping is an art or believing that it is a science can be equally self-serving, for art is subjective, the perogative of the creative, and science, objective, the "great legitimator." To view helping as primarily a creative effort is to set oneself apart, to be a creator with powers and potentialities possessed and appreciated by a select few. The view of the counselor as scientist is one of a posssessor of knowledge and authority, understood by a few but respected by all. It is our perception of ourselves and the world surrounding us that determines the appeal of one view over the other. During their training, non-professional counselors must be given the opportunity to assess their feelings and beliefs regarding these vital components of helping, and have impressed upon them the fact that a counselor's self-perception of his role is communicated to his clients. Any counselor will project a different image as a self-perceived artist than as a self-perceived scientist, but most important is the fact that the counselor's competence will be affected by the self-image he holds. The counselor who feels he is an artist will see fewer patterns in his experiences and his clients' behaviors, learning far less of what his clients have to teach him. The result maybe a narrow and primarily one-way counseling relationship as the counselor plies his art, with care and passion, to the client whose cure is a creative masterpiece. By contrast, the counselor who perceives himself as a scientist will remain more distant as he struggles to attain objectivity-the alpha and omega of science. As a seeker of patterns, our scientist-counselor will likely project himself as a person of keen interest and calculated action. This counselor will strive to learn all that his clients can teach him, but his projected image will not spark the "eager teacher' in many of them.

From my own experiences in the education and supervision of both professional and non-professional counselors, I have learned that it is better to conceptualize the counselor one wants to be than to analyze the counselor one has become. For this reason we incorporated the art and science of helping as topics for the theory portion of our crisis counselor training course at the REAL Crisis Center in Greenville, North Carolina while I was the center director. I will present here how we introduced the art and science of the process of helping to our volunteer non-professional counselors; this is of course only an example and I am sure that this can be handled in many different ways in accordance with the length of the course, size of the group and physical surroundings.

Our training program was a 10 week (50 hour) course divided into two hours of theory and three hours of technique per week. To give you some feeling of perspective, the topics for the theory section were, in order,

ORIENTATION

VALUES AND ATTITUDES CLARIFICATION

THE BASICS OF HUMAN BEHAVIOR

WHAT IS A CRISIS?

SCIENCE IN HELPING

ART IN HELPING

REFERRAL PROCESS

FOLLOW-UP

AND A CONCLUDING REVIEW AND DISCUSSION SESSION

The amount of time formally devoted to the role of art and science in the process of helping was four hours, and it was primarily spent in discussion. The logical beginning was to stimulate the group to think by giving each person some time to write his or her own definition of science; then allow time for sharing and discussing definitions (and possibly some exercises for developing group definitions.)

Next each member of the group would be given the task of writing his or her definition of art, and the same discussion opportunities would be provided. Eventually, the group's discussion will turn to comparing and contrasting art and science. Some key components in such discussions always are objective versus subjective and law versus lawless. I have found trainees eager to participate and interested in the discussions, but greatly in need of guidance in identifying the relevence to them for their counseling. A good technique to respond to this quandry is to have the trainees write their stereotypes of the artist, scientist and counselor. The discussion could then focus on the traits they have identified, the strengths and weaknesses, and the type of counselor-model they wish to hold and project to their clients. For groups having a particularly difficult time in this area, a simple script-writing exercise can be most helpful. This is done by having them assume the identity of their stereotypic artist or scientist and giving them a client situation with instructions to write a script for counseling the client in the character of the stereotype. Another technique of equal or greater effectiveness is utilizing their stereotypes in role playing.

Finally, it is essential that the trainer integrate and sum up the key concepts presented and discussed, for non-professional counselors must learn that counseling is not wholly an art or a science, but that it is a sequence of events, a process. The process of helping encompasses both artistic and scientific elements, and although there is room for individual difference, little significant variation can occur without affecting competence and drawing attention and criticism from peers and clients alike. Helpers must learn in addition that helping is not assistance, for assistance is the provision of a tangible such as food, money, shelter, etc.; whereas helping is the process by which intangible forces within the client are released enabling them to deal more effectively with themselves, others and their impersonal environment.

Contrary to the beliefs of some helpers, the process of helping is scientific in that it has patterns - behavior is predictable. Many known quantities of human behavior are covered in our earlier training session on "The Basics of Human Behavior," but one verity of prime importance is continually reemphasized and that is "every client wants not to have to be helped." Everyone wants to be independent, self-reliant, strong, and consciously usually perceives himself as such. Situations where the person does not adequately fulfill his self-image are threatening. When a person has exhausted his coping skills, without success, and seeks help; the counselor must understand this verity in order to cope with the client's ambivalence. A counselor must deal with ambivalence not only as it is expressed, but as it actually must exist in the client's unconscious. A good way to get this across to trainees is by analogy. As trainers we know ourselves to be in the role of helpers to the trainees and that they will experience and display the same ambivalence toward us as their clients will display toward their counseling. An acknowledgement and labeling of this via analogy can be most helpful and productive for learning. Many other patterns and verities of human behavior are found in the writings of Piaget, Freud and others. (In use of Freud, transference/counter-transference, and dependency are of particular importance for counselor training.) For this reason REAL began building a library and established an approved reading list of books for new trainees, requiring that at least two of these be read during the 10 week course. Time for group discussion of readings was an integral part of both our pre-service and in-service training program for crisis counselors and selected other volunteer positions.

Behavior and the process of helping are not unlike "hard" science. Let us recall for a moment some grade school science in the form of Newton's Three Laws of Motion:

1. A body at rest tends to remain at rest unless acted upon by an outside force.

2. A body in motion tends to remain in motion unless acted upon by an outside force.

3. For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction.

Newton's Third Law is a verbal description of the concept of ambivalence as discussed earlier. Newton's Second Law is a description of the acute manic client.(Ullmann and Krasner)[2] Newton's First Law describes the depressed client's pronounced psychomotor retardation.(Ullmann and Krasner)[3] The point I wish to illustrate is that not only is helping not unscientific, but that some patterns of behavior are also comparable to accepted laws of 'hard' science. Verities of human behavior are for the professional and non-professional alike only a little less dependable than are Sir Isaac Newton's Laws for scientists, although experimentation and replication are more complicated when not conducted in conventional scientific laboratories. This reality renders us more susceptable to profiteering through the promoting of theory and conjecture as fact, and the inappropriate generalization from the small scale to the wholesale. If you are inclined to view this as an unduly harsh observation, take a moment the next time you are in a bookstore and survey, critically the myriad of mind-mending and manipulating fads marketed each year. Similarly, a perusal of the back pages of any popular newsstand magazine, purporting to focus on human behavior, will reveal numerous invitations to days, weekends or weeks of ecstasy or agony, according to the particular prescription for your improvement- all for what is virtually never a nominal fee!

While we are not accustomed to expressing the verities of human behavior in the form of scientific laws, this can be done as with ambivalence for example: This can be stated as the Law of Ambivalence (Version 1) states that:

> To estimate the client's ambivalence toward help, one must look at the acceptance of help, which is directly related to the lesser need for it and indirectly related to the greater need, equaling the rejection factor.

another way of stating it is: Given the same degree of need, the

> stronger the client the lesser the rejection of help; and given the same degree of strength, the greater the need the greater the rejection.

For those of a mathematical bent, this can be expressed as follows:

> On a relative scale from one to ten, estimate the client's need for help and, separately, his strength, making a fraction by placing need over strength. This fraction reduced and converted to a whole number is the rejection factor as measured on the same scale. Thus a client whose need is estimated at 2 and whose strength is estimated at 5 will have a rejection factor of .4 on the scale; while a client whose need is estimated at 5 and whose strength is estimated at 2 will have a rejection factor of 2.5.

All of this is a variety of ways to express a simple truth, which is the fact that the more the client needs help the harder it is to help him. The stereotypic compliant client is a myth, for the greater the conscious compliance the greater the unconscious hostility, and therefore, greater ambivalence about accepting help is to be expected by the counselor. Because we in the helping professions do not have greater scientific appearances does not mean that science is not a significant part of helping.

It may seem that such a case has been built for science that the role of art must be comparatively insignificant; but this is not true, for one can be highly objective and wrong at the same time. The subjective, however, is never "wrong" because it is always opinion. Art is subjective, but opinion and intuition are very important artistic qualities for the counselor to possess. Science, itself, is far from devoid of such artistry; in fact science has been advanced greatly by the pre-scientific method employment of intuition. The following are examples of the intuition or artistry of the scientist at work:

> Andre Marie Ampere (1775-1836), after whom the unit of electric current is named, a genius of childlike simplicity, recorded in his diary the circumstances of his first mathematical discovery: On April 27, 1802,...I gave a shout of joy...It was seven years ago I proposed to myself a problem which I have not been able to solve directly, but for which I had foundby chance a solution, and knew that it was correct, without being able to prove it. The matter often returned to my mind and I had sought twenty times unsuccessfully for this solution. For some days I had carried the idea bout with me continually. At last, <u>i do not know how</u>, I found it, together with

> a large number of curious and new considerations concerning the theory of probability. As I think there are very few mathematicians in France who could solve this problem in less time, I have no doubt that its publication in a pamphlet of twenty pages is a good method for obtaining a chair of mathematics in a college.
>
> The memoir did in fact get him a professorship at the Lycee in Lyon. It was called 'Considerations of the Mathematical Theory of Games of Chance,' and demonstrated, among other things, that habitual gamblers are, in the long run, bound to lose.
>
> Another great mathematician, Karl Fredrich Gauss, described in a letter to a friend how he finally proved a theorem on which he had worked unsuccessfully for four years: At last two days ago I succeeded, not by dint of painful effort but so to speak by the grace of God. As a sudden flash of light, the enigma was solved... For my part I am unable to name the nature of the thread which connected what I previously knew with that which made my success possible.
>
> On another occasion Gauss is reported to have said: I have had my solutions for a long time, but do not yet know how I am to arrive at them. Polya - a contemporary mathematician - remarks: When you have satisfied yourself that the theorem is true, you start proving it.
>
> ...Max Plank, the father of the quantum theory, wrote in his autobiography that the poincer scientist must have a'vivid intuitive imagination for new ideas not generated by deduction, but by artistically creative imagination.'
>
> A branch of knowledge which operates predominately with abstract symbols, whose entire rationale and credo are objectivity, verifiability, logicality, turns out to be dependent on mental processes which are subjective, irrational, and verifiable only after the event.
>
> (Koestler)[4]

Such insights are equally important in counseling for they are the helper's artistry too, and as such they facilitate his orchestration or programming of the process of helping. Clients are not fit to a particular counselor's or program's technique, but techniques are tools consciously selected by the counselor, the practice of which at a given point, will most likely help facilitate the greatest growth and development of the client. This match is made on the basis of the judgment of the helper and his intuition is his artistry. In crisis intervention and emergency services, the artistry of the helper, like the artistry of the mathematician is frequently the beacon that lights the path

to factual confirmation at a later time. Such artistry is a subjective intangible that can be taught only to a limited degree; primarily it is born out of the union of concentrated education and a variety of related experiences stored in the unconscious.

Counseling is like a train going across the country; counselors can and should take their clients just as far down the tracks as their own education and experiences will justify. A counselor may artfully utilize his skills at any level of education and training, and be a better helper for his intuitive strengths; but ultimately it is his mastery of the science that must determine the boundries of his practice. Art, alone, can not successfully sustain the counselor who has not mastered the science of the process of helping, any more than creativity in picture composition will sustain the person who has not mastered the science of the camera and photography.

A counselor must possess both artistry and scientific knowledge of the process of helping to be competent, and the more the blend is enriched and refined, the more that person will stand out among his peers as a model to emulate. Competent counseling is not the product of an elite individual's inate traits, but the result of education and intuitive artistry, developed and nurtured through experience under the initial supervision of a competent professional. It is no less important for the non-professional or volunteer counselor to master both the art and science of helping than for the professional, as individuals at both levels of practice must be equally committed to achieving ever increasing levels of proficiency. To begin their journey along this road, non-professional helpers too must learn that the process of helping is scientific, because human behavior has predictable patterns correlating in validity in some instances almost as surely as Newton's Three Laws of Motion. Trainess must learn that the process of helping is artistic in its use of intuition and selection of

techniques to fit clients' needs; and they must learn to differentiate between helping and assistance, and to appreciate both the value of each and the relationship between them.

In order to plan, develop, implement and evaluate a training program adequate for the teaching and learning of these vital aspects of human behavior and the process of helping, agencies must also consider them in achieving a definition of their programatic level of service - particularly where both professional and non-professional counselors are to be utilized jointly as staff and/or volunteers.

In conclusion, I have tried to give you some specific examples, out of the many that apply, of the importance of art and science in the process of helping, the relevence of this information for the non-professional counselor, and ways which I have incorporated some of this material into the training of volunteer crisis counselors. However, the primary focus of this paper is philosophical and, as such, is aimed at stimulating thought and evaluation of existing training programs in view of what I have said here today. I thought at first that I would end this paper with a list of questions you might consider in re-examining your training programs. However, the questions which came to mind were all variations on one basic concern: To what extent are non-professional counselors learning only or primarily techniques, and to what extent are they learning to understand human behavior, and to apply its predictable patterns to themselves, their clients and to the process of helping?

Thank You.

Presented By:
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April 7, 1978

NOTES

1. Lowell D. Holmes, Anthropology: An Introduction (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1965), p. 70.

2. For definitions, see Leonard P. Ullmann/Leonard Krasner, A Psychological Approach to Abnormal Behavior (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentise-Hall, Inc., 1969), p. 416

3. Ibid., p. 417

4. Arthur Koestler, The Act of Creation: A Study of the Conscious and Unconscious in Science and Art (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1964) p. 117-118.